

## **Minutes Human Relations Commission June 22, 2006**

**Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on THURSDAY, June 22, 2006 11:30 A.M., at the Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room, Tempe, Arizona.**

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

Arlene Chin  
Edwin Gonzalez-Santin  
Hasaan Elsaad  
Joseph Mann  
Joel Navarro  
Gail Paredes-Ewen  
Safali Patel-Evans  
Janis Webb  
Muhammed Zubair

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Zach Berning  
Colleen Byron  
Michele Duval  
Linda Ritland

**City Staff Present:**

Rosa Inchausti  
Andrea Groves

**Guests Present:**

**Meeting convened at 11:45 A.M.**

**Chair Joel Navarro** called the meeting to order and invited members of the public to address the Commission.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances**

None

**Agenda Item 2- Council Diversity Update**

**Chair Joel Navarro led discussion on the Council Diversity Update:**

- 1) A group of Tempe residents formed Grupo Acción in an effort to examine the city's policies and procedures on being a fair and diverse workplace.
- 2) In their report, Grupo Acción claims that the city has failed to implement tools to make real changes. Any efforts put in place over the last five years were, according to the report, only cosmetic.
- 3) The HRC wanted to review the report in order to prepare a formal statement in response to the report. The HRC will share their comments at the Issue Review Session (IRS), June 29, 2006.

**General Discussion of the Grupo Acción Report included:**

- Many commissioners felt that the report did not have facts to back up its claims.

- They also felt that the report is just a product of a bigger issue—one that has to do with litigation now in Appellate Court.
- Many commissioners agreed that Grupo Acción and other groups interested in the city's diversity initiatives should be commended for their interest; however, all commissioners agreed that the city has made great strides in implementing a fair and inclusive workplace. They expressed that they are proud of the city and of the Diversity Office.
- Some commissioners thought that the city should look into a couple of the recommendations made in the report. In particular, they felt that it would be good for the city to create an exit interview process and implement a way for employees to evaluate their departments. Staff replied that the Diversity Steering Committee has discussed launching exit interviews. The city also has launched a performance evaluation called Performance Development Plan in order to gather formal feedback on employee performance.
- The commission overall felt that the report by Grupo Acción is related to the pending litigation and should avoid getting in the middle of political battle. They want to make it clear that they support the city but that they are empathetic to the concerns of Grupo Acción. In fact, they want the group to understand that they are welcome anytime to attend a HRC meeting to voice concerns.
- There was overall consensus that the HRC will attend IRS June 29, 2006 and make the following statement:

The mission of the Tempe Human Relations Commission is to promote mutual understanding and respect among the many groups of people who live, work and visit Tempe and create an environment whereby people from all backgrounds feel welcome and at home in our community. We are here to listen and citizens are always welcome to attend a commission meeting to discuss concerns. The commission recently reviewed the Grupo Acción report, and while we thank the group for sharing their viewpoint on the City of Tempe's diversity and employment practices, the commission is proud of what the city has accomplished to date through the hard work of the Diversity Department. The city has made great strides in its policies and procedures and the HRC supports those changes wholeheartedly. Of course, we recognize that process evolves and we are confident that the city will continue to improve in making Tempe the best place to live, work and play.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:35 P.M.**

Prepared by: Andrea Groves

Reviewed by: Rosa Inchausti

---

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Manager